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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003560

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [IZ](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: MAYSAN GOVERNOR DESCRIBES INTER-SHIA TENSIONS,
ELECTIONS, BUDGET

Classified By: PRT Team Leader Dan Foote for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) This is a Maysan PRT reporting cable.

12. (C/REL MCFI) Summary: Maysan,s Sadrists Governor Adel Mohder Maliki described tensions between Shi'a elements as he detailed a November 5 attack on Iraqi Police (IP) elements south of Maysan and a subsequent attack on the Amarah Office of the Martyr Sadr (OMS). He took credit for defusing a potentially volatile situation, but cautioned that continued targeting of political groups, without evidence of wrongdoing, could lead to negative repercussions. The Governor repeated his decision not to seek re-election, but expressed confidence that Sadrists would retain the Governor,s Pink Palace. Maliki also provided details of initial GOI proposals for Maysan,s 2009 budget, and shared his belief that provincial budget allocations should consider effectiveness of the execution of past projects and budgets. End Summary.

Attack on IP Fuels Immediate Retribution

13. (C/REL MCFI) In a November 5 meeting at the al-Rasheed Hotel in Baghdad, Governor Adel Mohder Maliki described tensions between Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Sadrists Trend as he detailed a November 5 attack on IP elements south of Maysan and a subsequent attack on the Amarah Office of the Martyr Sadr (OMS). According to Maliki, an explosively formed penetrator directed at IP vehicles killed an Iraqi policeman and wounded three IPs about halfway between Majar al-Kabir and Amarah. Shortly thereafter, seven or eight individuals) including IP members - attacked the OMS office in Amarah, where they beat two individuals and torched two rooms. Comment: The IP unit which was attacked was part of the Tactical Support Unit, which is reportedly under a moderate level of Badr Corps influence. End comment.

Unacceptable Targeting of Sadrists

14. (C/REL MCFI) Governor Maliki stated that &Whenever bad things happen in Maysan, officials immediately go after the Sadrists. This is unacceptable.8 He related conversations he had earlier in the day with Provincial Director of Police General Sa,ad and Iraqi Army 10th Division/38 Brigade Commander General Shihab to contain the incident. The OMS filed a complaint, and seven or eight individuals, including four IP members, had been detained and were awaiting trial. Maliki repeated the consistent lament (heard not only from Sadrists officials) that security operations, whether conducted by Iraqi Security or Coalition Forces, often target innocent Sadrists using a wide net. He called for stronger intelligence in order to seek out specific criminals, citing the potential for an eventual negative backlash in the province.

Maysan Elections) Governor Won,t Run, but Sadrists Will Win

15. (C/REL MCFI) When discussing his decision not to run for re-election in upcoming provincial polls, Maliki said he greatly wanted to continue as governor, but had decided not to run because he does not think he would win the election. When asked his thoughts about the chances of one of his Sadrists insiders, Zaid al-Hoshi, he stated that he thought that Zaid and his technocrat party would be able to win the governor's seat.

Maysan,s Small 2009 Budget) Proposed Meritocracy
Allocations

16. (C/REL MCFI) The Governor was in Baghdad to discuss 2009 budget issues, and stated that the proposed budget of 222 billion Iraqi Dinar (200 million USD) was too little to make adequate progress in running and rebuilding the province. He noted that such funding levels would necessitate the cancellation of long-planned strategic projects such as a governance center, a building for the immigration service, and other major infrastructure projects. Maliki explained that he requested that the GOI allocate a portion of provincial budgets based not solely upon population, but taking into account effective governance. Maysan stacks up well when measures such as percentage of projects completed and budget execution are taken into consideration. He expressed disappointment over the Prime Minister,s explanation that the system is not set up to earmark funds based on merit, but promised to try to tap into the emergency budget using this argument.

Comment

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17. (C/REL MCFI) This was the Governor,s most comfortable engagement to date with the PRT Team Leader. He remains strongly connected to Maysan,s future despite his decision not to seek re-election, and seems frustrated over the immediate association of Sadrists with all attacks in the province. His cautionary words about potential effects of continued, haphazard targeting of Sadrists elements are evidence of his concern over a possible future showdown, and may lend credence to reports of Badr Corps, growing influence in Maysan. End Comment.
CROCKER